DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 242 732 TM 830 723

AUTHOR	Adams, R. S.; And Others
TITLE	Experimental and Developmental Research Including Evaluation. Occasional Papers No. 7.
INSTITUTION	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Bangkok (Thailand). Asian Centre for Educational Innovation for Development.
PUB DATE	Nov 81
NOTE	19p.
AVAILABLE FROM	UNIPOB, 205 East Forty-second Street, New York, NY 10017
PUB TYPE	Viewpoints (120)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Cross Cultural Studies; Developing Nations; Educational Development; *Educational Innovation; *Educational Research; *Evaluation; Foreign Countries; Institutional Role; *Research Needs; *Social Change
IDENTIFIERS	Asia; Pacific Region

ABSTRACT

In preparation for the Seventh Regional Consultation Meeting on the Asian Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID) in June 1981, some of the eminent educators in Asia and the Pacific were invited by the Asian Centre of Educational Innovation for Development (ACEID) to present their thoughts on APEID. This document contains papers by R.S. Adams, Yung Dug Lee, S.K. Mitra, and Tan Sri Dato Haji Murad bin Mohammed Noor on the topic "Experimental and Developmental Research Including Evaluation." In his paper, Adams differentiates among five innovation phases (origination, specification, operation, implementation, and consolidation) and suggests ways that experimental and developmental research can be carried out in each. Lee offers a definition of experimental and developmental research and suggests what needs to be done in connection with future APEID activities. Mitra provides definitions of experimental and developmental research and evaluation and emphasizes that experimental research should be linked to developmental research and evaluation. Finally, Noor argues for the need for a systematic evaluation of education. (LC)

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Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific
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BKA/81/M/728-500

PREFACE

In preparation for the Seventh Regional Consultation Meeting on the Asian Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID) (Bangkok, June 1981), some of the eminent educators in Asia and the Pacific were invited by the Asian Centre of Educational Innovation for Development (ACEID) to present their thoughts on some aspects of APEID.

The Asian Centre has much pleasure in bringing out these papers in a series of Occasional Papers, and expresses its gratitude to the authors for making this possible.

Occasional Paper No. 7 contains four papers on "Experimental and developmental research including evaluation", contributed by:

1. Professor R.S. Adams, Chairman, New Zealand Council for Educational Research, New Zealand
2. Dr. Yung Dug Lee, Professor of Education, Department of Education, College of Education, Seoul National University, Republic of Korea
3. Dr. S.K. Mitra, Director, National Council of Educational Research and Training, India
4. Tan Sri Dato Haji Murad bin Mohammed Noor, Director-General of Education and Chairman of the National Development Group for Educational Innovation, Ministry of Education, Malaysia

EXPERIMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL RESEARCH INCLUDING EVALUATION

by
R.S. Adams
Chairman, New Zealand Council for Educational Research
New Zealand

Elaboration of concept

Following research done under the auspices of the International Institute of Educational Planning (I.I.E.P.) (Adams and Chen), it is useful to differentiate five innovation phases, viz.

1. Origination: the conditions existing in the period prior to the innovation and the circumstances that brought about the idea of the innovation;
2. Specification: the period during which specifications for the innovation are developed;
3. Operation: the period when the innovation is first used or applied (whether experimentally or not, and whether as a 'trial' or not);
4. Implementation: the period when procedures are introduced to enable the innovation to spread throughout the system; and
5. Consolidation: the period during which the innovation becomes part of the system and is no longer regarded as an innovation.

For each of these phases, it is reasonable to suggest (but sometimes neither practical nor economical to carry out) 'Experimental and Developmental research'. For example, if the new innovation is proposed as a solution to an existing problem (e.g., education for self-employment as a solution to youth unemployment), it is reasonable to conduct research not only on the facts of existing youth unemployment, but also on the (logical) feasibility of the proposed solution before action is undertaken.

Similarly, for the specification and operation (trial) phases, there are grounds for undertaking experimental and developmental research to ensure that basic issues relating to specification and operation are resolved in order to avoid going ahead with an inappropriate or an inadequate innovation.

However, as research shows repeatedly, it is during the implementation phase that innovations become most liable to failure. And it is during this phase that least experimental and developmental research and evaluation is carried out - and is clearly most needed.

Alternative mechanisms for research

Fairly clearly the nature of the research problem varies from phase to phase, so any one phase can only be dealt with here very cursorily.

As an introductory comment though, one general point ought to be made. Investment in research ought to be seen in relation to the likely return from the investment and the risks being run.

While research methodology can be extremely sophisticated and complicated (and expensive), sometimes much simpler and cheaper methods may yield information that, while falling short of the quality of sophisticated research, is quite sufficient for the evaluative purposes required.

Origination: In this phase it is probably useful to employ surveys, public enquiries, commissions of enquiry, the Delphi technique, ethnographic studies, participant observation studies and the like to identify and assess the true nature of the problem. Given that during this phase 'solutions' will be proposed, crude cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis would be appropriate.

Specification: Assuming that at this point the chosen 'solution' is to become the innovation, 'experimental and developmental' research will be constrained by the nature of the innovation. For example, curricula innovations require techniques different from those required for educational and administrative ones. Nonetheless, two broad strategies suggest themselves: 'laboratory-based' work in which procedures are developed in a setting outside the usual operating system, e.g., experimental projects in specially set-up schools, classes, and usually run by 'experts', and 'system-based' undertakings in which the 'workers' are closely and intimately involved in the development, e.g., school-based developments.

Operation: At heart, developmental, experimental, evaluative research should attempt to answer the question "Will the innovation work?" Such a question requires not only that the 'effects' (and side effects) of using the innovation be examined, but that the process be also placed under close scrutiny. Much research into innovation has revealed that it is in the operating process of innovations that the innovation's aims and character is subverted. Techniques to deal with this latter problem require observational procedures - usually systematic and persistent ones.

Implementation: If implementation is the point at which most innovations become most vulnerable (as they do), what is needed here is not only the careful planning of implementation stages and procedures, but their trialling as well. Implementation as a procedure must itself come under careful scrutiny.

Given that implementation involves negotiating the acceptability of the innovation by unsuspecting, (possibly unresponsive and even hostile) workers, research will need to employ techniques of observation, opinion sampling and trouble-shooting.

As a final point that bears on the issue of planning for innovation, the Adams and Chen research work suggests that at any phase there are certain aspects relating to that phase that always need to be covered:

1. The task (for that phase) needs to be clearly defined;
2. The rationale or reason behind it needs to be clearly spelled out;
3. The methodology for attacking the task needs to be specified;
4. Links need to be established with those parts of the education system (and society) likely to be affected by the innovation;
5. Procedures for co-ordinating and arranging events must be established;
6. Cost, and particularly time and budgeting need to be undertaken.

EXPERIMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL RESEARCH INCLUDING EVALUATION

by

Yung Dug Lee
Department of Education, College of Education
Seoul National University, Republic of Korea

I have given much thought to this topic and tried to formulate its concept. In no way expecting to give flashes of new ideas, I simply write down what I have thought of this topic. Basically, experimental and developmental research may be defined as an effort to provide a wide knowledge base for adapting educational systems to the indigenous setting in a way that builds its capacity for solving educational problems accompanying social changes. We can cite three conditions which further qualify this statement.

First, indigenization constitutes one of the high points of an educational system that is in a continual evolvement. This means that education must be unique, contributing to the national development goals as distinct from those of other nations. Viewed from the main thrust of APEID activities, this should be a welcomed feature of experimental and developmental research, for we can hardly expect any contribution from the education which fails to take its root in the indigenous soil.

The second condition is its relationship to social change. The complexity of emergent changes we see today makes it impossible to single out few factors responsible for social changes. There can be myriads of factors. What is apparent, however, is that education, among others, should be pointed out as the most potent factor for social change. The contribution of education to national development should be viewed from this point. This approach reflects special emphasis on the role of education in social innovations. Despite the importance of this approach, there has been a strong tendency in the Asian region to hold education responsible for merely assisting in the maintenance of cultural heritage and social stability. It is a matter of special attention that satisfaction with this passive role of education explains the failure by many member countries to fully tap its potential role in social innovations to the fullest measure. Looking towards an era of new dynamism, this traditional notion should give way to a new view - that education should be a major stimulant for social change.

Linking education to national development should be approached from this point of view. Therefore, experimental and developmental research based on this approach will provide the foundation for building national capabilities of performing educational innovations conducive to national development.

Third, an important philosophy of educational innovation is that any attempt at innovating a component of an educational system must be done in the context of a whole system. Here again, the concept of systems approach is reflected. This philosophy is well accepted among educators and scholars, but few experience it. Our experience with the Elementary-Middle School Development Project provides an empirical case advocating this approach. Theoretically, this does not need amplication, but, in practice, many lose sight of a larger perspective in confusing a welter of details in one or two components.

Having conceptualized the experimental and developmental research, the next step is to suggest what needs to be done in connection with APEID activities in the future.

Linking education to national development necessarily leads us to be concerned with the multi-dimensional nature of development. It is required, therefore, that the development research address itself not only to educational aspects, but also to overall aspects related to national development, or maintain close linkage with them. The same can be said of the constituents of the National Development Group. We made the practice of involving educational research institutions only in APEID activities, ignoring the importance of participation by those representing multi-dimensions. In the case of Korea, the participation of the Korean Development Institute (KDI) and the Korea Rural Development Institute (KRDI) in the APEID activities, or creating an infrastructure for collaborating with them, is much desired in making educational innovations conducive to national development.

The second concern is with the absence of an extensive research by each country to define the educational innovations in the context of envisioned social changes. There has been much talk of educational innovations, but they have not been concretely defined in terms of their leading role in national development. It is essential that such a study be carried out at the national level, for the absence of such a study will lead us to go astray, let alone the contribution of educational innovations to national development. 'The Long-term Prospect for Educational Development (1978-91)' carried out by the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI) may well serve as an exemplary approach relevant to other nations. Such a study should identify the challenges to education during the coming fifteen years or so, and identify the major tasks that our efforts should be

directed to achieve. In the process, efforts should be made to identify problems and discuss their implications in the widest possible context, involving as many policy-makers and scholars as possible, with a view to reaching the consensus of opinions regarding the future course of actions. In so doing, we can direct innovations towards meeting our aspirations, and failure to do so amounts to leaving innovations at the mercy of haphazardness.

Finally, recent years have witnessed the emergence of new subjects such as population education, environment education, health education. These may well be clustered as 'problem-oriented education' which seems to hold a larger possibility of revolutionalizing teaching methods. The traditional subject matters have been taught in conventional methods over so long periods of time that it seems uneasy to break loose from the cycle of ineffective teaching. By contrast, the new area fascinates me with a possible breakthrough for stimulating the innovation of teaching methods. APEID should pay due consideration to research in this area in designing its future activities.

BRIEF NOTE ON EXPERIMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH INCLUDING EVALUATION

by

S.K. Mitra
Director, National Council of Educational Research and Training
India

The report of the Study Group Meeting of APEID organized by Unesco, Bangkok, from 5-8 April 1980, Part III, opens with the following statement: "The primary focus of regional co-operation in APEID is, and should continue to be, educational innovation directed to social and economic development and reform." (p. 17). The report goes on to say that "innovation in education is not a goal or an end in itself, but a process of planned change specifically designed to achieve certain goals." In the context of the region of Asia and the Pacific, the main goal of educational innovation has been identified to be development. In a footnote to this statement, the report mentions that "The Advisory Committee stressed that more emphasis should be laid on a rethinking of the relationship between education and development, including such issues as cultural and historical development in harmonization with modernization, education as a developmental goal in itself, etc." The recommendation regarding developing national capabilities in experimental and developmental research including evaluation has to be seen in this context.

The basic premises which emerge from the above statements are:

1. That educational innovation is a process of planned change;
2. That it is designed to achieve certain goals; and
3. That it is directed to social and economic development.

Any educational innovation should, therefore, have a design. It is not of static inputs; nor is it a mechanical model. Innovation represents a process of change. It is not an undirected change. It is a movement towards specific goals of social and economic development.

Experimental research starts typically with a hypothesis or a set of hypotheses about the processes of changes, whichever are likely to meet the requirements of the situation, in which the goals and directions are given. In experimental research, one selects only those hypotheses which have a logical base in theory, and/or which arise out of previous research findings. Usually, there are trappings of both theory and empirical research findings for the hypotheses in experimental research.

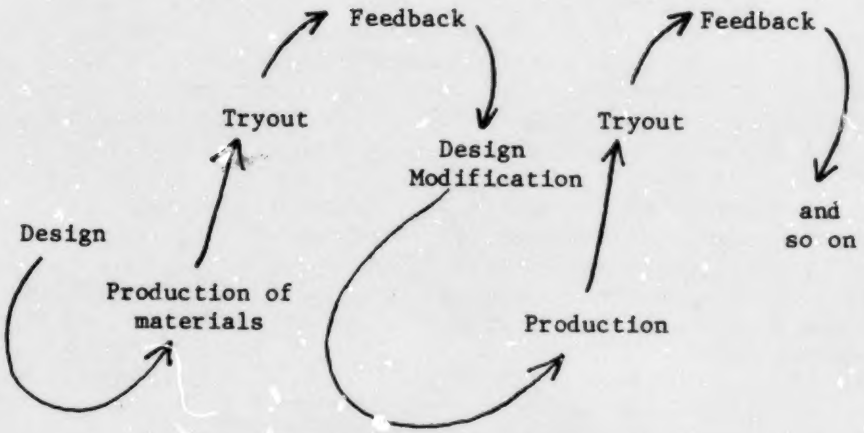
Experimental research is concerned with the testing of the hypotheses. The design of research in education is usually such that one draws random samples (which may be students, teachers, schools, textbooks, etc.) from a defined population. Some samples are kept as 'control' and the rest as 'experimental'. The hypotheses in effect require certain kinds of things to be done (technically called 'treatment') to the experimental samples only, but not to the control samples. There is usually a pre-test for both experimental and control samples, and there is a post-test for both the samples, after the experiment is over. A comparison is then made between the gain of experimental samples with the gain of the control samples, the gain being measured by the difference in results between the pre-test and post-test. A simple model of the design is given below:

	Pre-test		Post-test	Gain
Experimental	a_{1e}	Experimental learning experience	a_{2e}	$a_{2e} - a_{1e}$
Control	a_{1c}	No experimental learning experience	a_{2c}	$a_{2c} - a_{1c}$

One expects from the hypotheses that the gain for the expermental group, i.e. $a_{2e} - a_{1e}$, would be greater than the same for the control group, i.e. $a_{2c} - a_{1c}$. There are variations in this design depending on how rigorously one wishes to control the various factors which may affect the results.

Developmental research is not generally concerned with hypothesis testing. The main task here is one of developing materials, methods, resources and such other things, which may help in the development of a system of learning, of administration or management. The task has to be defined and effort directed to accomplish the task.

Research is an important ingredient of developmental effort. Testing is built into the operation of development right from the design stage to the stage of the production of finished product, or the final operation of the envisaged system. It is a kind of loop or circle.



The process ends only when the development required has met the specifications stated in advance in relation to the goals and directions. Formative evaluation, process evaluation, product evaluation and impact evaluation are parts of the developmental research. Here, one operates in situ with a complex situation and has to analyse the critical factors and inter-relationships in developing the specifications of a design as well as in the evaluation which follows a try-out, so that the feedback is relevant and leads to progressive development.

Costs form an important part of the total scheme of developmental research and, therefore, before decisions are taken for a particular kind of development, one needs a good deal of data on costs and a critical analysis of existing data, which may be quantitative as well as qualitative. It is on the basis of data that an initial choice of strategy can be made.

In India, experimental research in education has, by and large, been undertaken in the universities. Developmental research has been done largely in the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), the State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) and similar other state-supported educational institutions. In experimental research the objects of study have been methods of teaching, processes of learning, teacher education, teaching aids, etc. Developmental research has largely centered on instructional materials, including textbooks, teachers' guides, science kits, etc. Experimental research usually gets published in journals. The developmental research has, on the other hand, not been publicized to any great extent.

The pressures on actual developmental tasks fulfilling time targets are substantial. Consequently time to build research into the developmental activities, as visualized in the developmental research model, has not been available. A good example of developmental research in recent times is the UNICEF-assisted project of NCERT called Comprehensive Access to Primary Education, where the project document visualizes the various steps, as per model. Experience suggests that training in experimental and developmental research requires much more emphasis than we have given so far.

Experimental research should lead to developmental research and evaluation, because experiments are meant for arriving at decisions regarding innovations. However, in order to introduce innovations into the educational system, developmental research and evaluation are essential. Our experience shows that usually such a linkage does not exist. If one goes back to the context in which experimental research, developmental research and evaluation have to be seen, it appears that one leads to the other. Innovation being a planned process of change in the field, a comparable situation exists in the field of agriculture, where we find that experimental research is done carefully, after which there is developmental research in the field, where evaluation, including costs and benefits, are included. The Philippine study on elementary education reform is a good case. The Swedish studies on educational transformation preceded implementation of actual reform.

APEID activities during its third cycle should include specifically experimental and developmental research including evaluation to be carried out by the participating countries for all the problem areas. A pre-requisite would be careful operationalizing of the problem areas into specific tasks along with the objectives they are expected to achieve and the impact they are expected to lead to. It may be necessary to select a few on-going projects for an in-depth evaluation and a fresh look. APEID plans should include such research activities.

Countries of the region may select specific problem areas, and may form research groups which should function under the auspices of APEID to develop designs, methodologies, techniques, etc. The Asian Centre of Educational Innovation for Development (ACEID)1/ may only co-ordinate such activities. These countries might receive APEID assistance in carrying out the specified research.

ACEID may set up task forces to continually evaluate and monitor progress. The Chairmen of the National Development Groups for Educational Innovation (NDGs) from the participating countries may form the task forces, but strengthening of ACEID in research capabilities will be necessary.

1/ ACEID is an integral part of the Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok.

EXPERIMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL RESEARCH INCLUDING EVALUATION

by

Tan Sri Dato Haji Murad bin Mohd. Noor
Director-General of Education, Ministry of Education
Chairman, National Development Group for Educational Innovation
Malaysia

Evaluation is a systematic attempt to provide answers to questions. It is the quest for explanations, so that more knowledge can be gained concerning the matter under study. Evaluation is also a quest for efficiency. In the field of education, evaluation would seek to ascertain the internal efficiency of the education system, so that with the feedback information that is obtained, appropriate measures may be taken either to perform the necessary 'course correction' to the system if deviation is detected, or, if no course correction is necessary, to further raise the level of the system's efficiency so that optimal benefits may be derived from it.

The need for a systematic evaluation of the education system cannot be overemphasized. The reason is perhaps obvious enough. Education has long been recognized and accepted as a critical component of development. Among developing countries, this notion of education is extended to include a host of other things: as not only a means of raising political and social consciousness, but also, perhaps more importantly, of increasing the number of skilled persons and improving the level of trained manpower. Such notions of the potential of education has given rise to an unprecedented growth of enrolment at all levels of education, substantially at the primary, and significantly at the secondary and tertiary levels. Concomitantly, and buttressed by the notion and the belief that education could deliver the promised goods, investment on education has not only been substantial but also rising at a steady rate.

In view of the prevailing optimism and pious hope for education, and, in view of the substantial investment made on education, systematic and informed evaluation of the education system, to be sure of its internal efficiency, becomes not only imperative but a matter of paramount urgency.

Evaluation of sort has been carried out from time to time in countries of the Asian region. Malaysia's Dropout Study, Thailand's Achievement Study, Philippines' Survey of the Outcome of Elementary Education (SOUTELE), and Indonesia's National Assessment Study may perhaps be characterized as systematic attempts at evaluating, from the respective country's own preferred perspective, the efficiency and efficacy of the education system. Malaysia's notion of efficiency was based on dropout rate indicators: the larger the dropout rate, the less efficient is the system; conversely, the smaller the dropout rate, the more efficient is the education system in achieving its educational objectives. In the case of the Indonesian, the Philippine and the Thai studies, the scholastic achievement of the students was used as the indicator of efficiency, and the critical variable for policy decision.

Yet these studies do not make us the wiser. The problems that we hope to cure remain very much with us. Dropouts are still with us in Malaysia, though in slightly less numbers; the problem of poor performance still plague and hound Indonesian, Thai and Philippine and also Malaysian educators and managers. And as though we did not have enough, new problems emerge to further compound and confound the education scene. Our present predicament brings me to recall John Easley's biting remarks. He says "In education we have now had half a century of so-called scientific research. Yet almost everyone I discuss this research with is convinced that the results are not only vulnerable but mostly useless."

What went wrong? Lack of enthusiasm or lack of research activity certainly cannot be suggested to explain our lack of success in what we do. We are bubbling not only with enthusiasm but also with a lot of activities. Perhaps we have not understood the problem properly, or perhaps our lack of success is due merely to the complexity of the data or the relative youthfulness of the field, or is there a more fundamental reason for the lack of success?

In this connection, I can think of a couple of reasons, among others, which may help to throw light into our present plight. First there is a lack of precision in the way in which we conceptualize the educational problem. In the research we mentioned above, the concept of educational efficiency was derived rather than explicitly stated.

Secondly, there is a lack of unity and uniformity among educators in regard to the methodology and theoretical framework concerning the educational problems to be studied and the manner in which they should be approached and addressed. These countries constructed their own brand of preferred schemes and hoped that these would explain why their respective systems were not responsive and reacting the way it should to the needs of the students. It is

perhaps for this reason that results of national studies cannot be replicated or generalized beyond national boundaries, even though other countries also share the same concern.

These, and other factors, have perhaps accounted for the lack of success in research in the field of education. Maybe it is for this reason that we do not possess a clear picture of the efficiency of our education system. Seen in this light, our actions in the past (for that matter, the present and perhaps the future if no course correction was made) could perhaps be described as uninformed, based on premises that were conceptually questionable. In Malaysia, we have found that our notion of basic education which for so long has been taken for granted (or, to put it in another way, taken as conceptually resolved) need rigorous review and redefinition. In the past we accepted the features of the basic education which in many ways resembled those of other countries. What we took as problematic and critical to basic education were such indicators like dropout rate, school facilities, teacher quality. We thought that by reducing the dropout rate, by improving educational facilities and teacher quality, we would have raised the internal efficiency of basic education, and thus realize other desired ideals like democratization of education, equality of educational opportunity.

Recently, the findings of the Cabinet Committee Report on the implementation of national education policies revealed among other things that all was not well with primary education. In concrete terms, the Cabinet Committee noted that there was a lack of a rigorous definition of what should constitute primary education, as a result of which, the committee further noted, a good number of students, after having gone through six or seven years of schooling, failed to master the basic skills of learning - the 3Rs: reading, writing and arithmetic. The Committee recommended that a restructuring and reorganizing of primary education was necessary in order to emphasize the elements of the 3Rs at that level of education.

All these, the lack of utility and generalizability of national studies, and the increasing effort at tinkering with the education system in order to raise its efficiency and viability even in the absence of informed inquiry, point to the need for a proper accounting system of the education system so that what we do is worth the effort, the time, and the money that we put into such effort. Currently, we are not only unsure of what we are doing (that is, whether it is the right way of doing things) but, perhaps more importantly, whether we can say with a fair degree of confidence that the evaluation studies that we have undertaken have revealed reliable findings to justify the 'corrective course' that we have taken as a result of these studies. It is to be pointed out that the effects of uninformed measures will manifest themselves, not immediately but at a much

later date after so much has been committed. In this connection I am reminded of a large-scale national study conducted in one industrialized country when, after some years following the full implementation of the study's recommendation, the principal author made a public statement admitting error of judgement. While we may sympathetically argue that it is only natural to err, the error, however, has serious implications for the role of research for decision making. It would mean that research would have to be quarantined until its reliability and usefulness could be substantially demonstrated.

I believe that a meeting of the minds among educational experts of the region to take stock of what has been done in the area of research and evaluation is in order. I believe this to be a necessary and urgent task to be quickly undertaken lest we might be doing something and committing our hard-earned and limited resources for something the pay-off of which is highly questionable. In this meeting, attention may be focused on refining further the methodology and concept of educational evaluation and research.

The Asian Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID) has as its primary goal to contribute to the building of national capabilities for undertaking educational innovations linked to the problems of national development, thereby improving the quality of life of the people in the Member States.

All projects and activities within the framework of APEID are designed, developed and implemented co-operatively by the participating Member States through the national centres which they have associated for this purpose with APEID.

The 21 countries in Asia and the Pacific participating in APEID are: Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Each country has set up a National Development Group (NDG) to identify and support educational innovations for development within the country and facilitate exchanges between countries.

The Asian Centre of Educational Innovation for Development (ACEID), an integral part of the Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, coordinates the activities under APEID and assists the Associated Centres (AC) in carrying them out.

The aims of APEID are:

- To stimulate efforts in the Member States for the development and implementation of innovations in education, both formal and non-formal;
- To make students, parents, communities, teachers and other educational personnel, aware of the need for relevant changes in education;
- To promote understanding and appreciation of the differences in educational practices and approaches of the Member States.